shared between the Government of India and the State Government of Madhya Pradesh in the ratio of 75:25. The Central Government has already released its entire share of Rs. 193.50 crore.

Removal of control on drugs

3360. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the drug manufacturers are demanding to completely do away with controls; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Various suggestions have been made by the pharmaceutical industry regarding the pricing of drugs, which, *inter-alia*, include complete decontrol of the pharma industry. The Government have recently announced the 'Pharmaceutical Policy-2002' taking into account:

(i) the essentiality of improving incentives for research and development in the Indian pharmaceutical industry, to enable the industry to achieve sustainable growth particularly in view of anticipated changes in the Patent Law; and

(ii) the need for reducing further the rigours of price control particularly in view of the ongoing process of liberalization.

The main objectives of this Policy are, *inter alia*, ensuring abundant availability at reasonable prices within the country of good quality essential pharmaceuticals of mass consumption and strengthening the indigenous capability for cost effective quality production.

Subsidized drugs for AIDS

3361. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cheap, subsidized Indian drugs are being used by Nigeria to control AIDS; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the programme proposed to provide similar subsidized drugs in India, to help poor patients, especially in rural areas, through international aid as well as co- operation of manufacturing firms, like Cipla and Ranbaxy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The Indian Pharmaceutical Companies like M/s. Ranbaxy and M/s Cipla have had negotiations with the Government of Nigeria for supply of three anti-retroviral drugs namely Lamivudine, Stavudine and Nevirapine to the Federal Ministry of Health, Nigeria. Based on the information received from M/s Cipla India, consignments for supply of anti-retroviral drugs namely Lamivudine, Stavudine and Nevirapine have been dispatched to Ministry of Health, Nigeria.

The Government at present provides financial support to States/Union Territories for the treatment of opportunistic infections in all public sector hospitals. But anti-retroviral therapies are not supported by the Government in the programme because of their prohibitive costs on account of indefinite period of treatment and other supportive investigations required for monitoring the progress of the disease. However, Government has been progressively reducing the excise and custom duties on anti-retroviral drugs to make them available to HIV/AIDS patients at reasonable price.

Vintage Allowance Scheme for urea units

†3362. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Vintage Allowance Scheme is in operation for urea manufacturing factories;

(b) if so, the broad outline of the scheme; and

(c) the details of benefits provided under this scheme to urea manufacturing units during the Seventh Pricing Period and how much?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Vintage Allowance of 5 per cent each in the norms relating to capacity utilization and energy consumption has been allowed to urea units that have been in operation for more than 10 years. Vintage Allowance was introduced *w.e.f.* 1.4.1988 during the Vth Pricing Period and has been continued during the VIth Pricing Period which was valid up to 30.6.1997. Finalization of policy parameters/

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.